Central Intelligence Agency

Washington, D.C. 20505

5 May 2016

Mr. John Greenewald, Jr.
[redacted]

Reference: F-2016-01499

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This is a final response to your 17 April 2016 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, received in the office of the Information and Privacy Coordinator on 18 April 2016, for the following record:

MORI ID 26146:26146 – DOC IS MEMO RELATING TO RECONSTRUCTION OF AGENCY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANS TO ASSASSINATE FIDEL CASTRO IS AT BEST AN IMPERFECT HISTORY.

We conducted a search of our previously released database and located the enclosed document, consisting of 148 pages. Since you are entitled to the first 100 pages free, and the cost of the remaining pages is minimal, there is no charge for the document.

Sincerely,

Michael Lavergne

Michael Lavergne
Information and Privacy Coordinator

Enclosure

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25 April 1967

MEMORANDUM

This reconstruction of Agency involvement in plans to assassinate Fidel Castro is at best an imperfect history. Because of the extreme sensitivity of the operations being discussed or attempted, as a matter of principle no official records were kept of planning, of approvals, or of implementation. The few written records that do exist are either largely tangential to the main events or were put on paper from memory years afterward. William Harvey has retained skeletal notes of his activities during the years in question, and they are our best source of dates. [redacted] of the Office of Medical Services, has a record of whom he met and when and cryptic references to the subjects discussed. [redacted] of TSD, has a record of two or three dates that are pertinent. [redacted] and [redacted] were involved in only the technical aspects of operational planning, and their participations were short-lived. Although fragmentary, their records are a help in establishing critical time frames. Operational files are useful in some instances, because they give dates of meetings, the substances of which may be inferred from collateral information.

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For the most part, though, we have had to rely on information given to us orally by people whose memories are fogged by time. Their recollections of dates are particularly hazy, and some of them

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are no longer able to keep the details of one plan separate from those of another. We interviewed everyone whom we could identify as likely to be knowledgeable, with the exceptions of Mr. Dulles and General Cabell. A complete list is attached at Tab A. We did not go on fishing expeditions among the mere possibles. To have done so would have risked making witting a number of employees who were previously unwitting and, in our estimate, would have added little to the details available from those directly involved. There are inconsistencies among the various accounts, but most of them can be resolved by collating the information furnished by all of the identifiable participants in a particular plan and by then checking it against specific dates that can be fixed with fair certainty. We believe that this reconstruction of what happened and of the thinking associated with it is reasonably sound. If there are significant inaccuracies in the report, they are most likely to occur in faulty ordering of the sequence of events. People still remember much of what happened, but they can no longer recall precisely when.

It became clear very early in our investigation that the vigor with which schemes were pursued within the Agency to eliminate Castro personally varied with the intensity of the U.S. Government's efforts to overthrow the Castro regime. We can identify five separate phases in Agency assassination planning, although the transitions from one

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to another are not always sharply defined. Each phase is a reflection of the then prevailing Government attitude toward the Cuban regime.

a. Prior to August 1960: All of the identifiable schemes prior to about August 1960, with one possible exception, were aimed only at discrediting Castro personally by influencing his behaviour or by altering his appearance.

b. August 1960 to April 1961: The plots that were hatched in late 1960 and early 1961 were aggressively pursued and were viewed by at least some of the participants as being merely one aspect of the over-all active effort to overthrow the regime that culminated in the Bay of Pigs.

c. April 1961 to late 1961: A major scheme that was begun in August 1960 was called off after the Bay of Pigs and remained dormant for several months, as did most other Agency operational activity related to Cuba.

d. Late 1961 to late 1962: That particular scheme was reactivated in early 1962 and was again pushed vigorously in the era of Project MONGOOSE and in the climate of intense administration pressure on CIA to do something about Castro and his Cuba.

e. Late 1962 until well into 1963: After the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962 and the collapse of Project MONGOOSE, the

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aggressive scheme that was begun in August 1960 and revived in April 1962 was finally terminated in early 1963. Two other plots were originated in 1963, but both were impracticable and nothing ever came of them.

We cannot overemphasize the extent to which responsible Agency officers felt themselves subject to the Kennedy administration's severe pressures to do something about Castro and his regime. The fruitless and, in retrospect, often unrealistic plotting should be viewed in that light.

Many of those we interviewed stressed two points that are so obvious that recording them here may be superfluous. We believe, though, that they are pertinent to the story. Elimination of the dominant figure in a government, even when loyalties are held to him personally rather than to the government as a body, will not necessarily cause the downfall of the government. This point was stressed with respect to Castro and Cuba in an internal CIA draft paper of October 1961, which was initiated in response to General Maxwell Taylor's desire for a contingency plan. The paper took the position that the demise of Fidel Castro, from whatever cause, would offer little opportunity for the liberation of Cuba from Communist and Soviet Bloc control. The second point, which is more specifically relevant to our investigation, is that bringing about the downfall of a government necessarily requires the removal of its leaders from

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positions of power, and there is always the risk that the participants will resort to assassination. ~~Such removals from power as the house arrest of a Mossadeq or the flight of a Batista should NOT cause one to overlook the killings of a Diem or of a Trujillo by forces encouraged but not controlled by the U.S. Government.~~

There is a third point, which was not directly made by any of those we interviewed, but which emerges clearly from the interviews and from review of files. The point is that of frequent resort to synecdoche--the mention of a part when the whole is to be understood, or vice versa. Thus, we encounter repeated references to phrases such as "disposing of Castro," which may be read in the narrow, literal sense of assassinating him, when it is intended that it be read in the broader, figurative sense of dislodging the Castro regime. Reversing the coin, we find people speaking vaguely of "doing something about Castro" when it is clear that what they have specifically in mind is killing him. In a situation wherein those speaking may not have actually meant what they seemed to say or may not have said what they actually meant, they should not be surprised if their oral shorthand is interpreted differently than was intended.

The suggestion was made to us that operations aimed at the assassination of Castro may have been generated in an atmosphere of stress in intelligence publications on the possibility of Castro's

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demise and on the reordering of the political structure that would follow. We reviewed intelligence publications from 1960 through 1966, [redacted] The NIE's on "The Situation and Prospects in Cuba" [redacted] have brief paragraphs on likely successor governments if Castro were to depart the scene. [redacted] In each case the treatment is no more nor less than one would expect to find in comprehensive round-ups such as these. We conclude that there is no reason to believe that the operators were unduly influenced by the content of intelligence publications.

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Drew Pearson's column of 7 March 1967 refers to a reported CIA plan in 1963 to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro. Pearson also has information, as yet unpublished, to the effect that there was a meeting at the State Department at which assassination of Castro was discussed and that a team actually landed in Cuba with pills to be used in an assassination attempt. There is basis in fact for each of those three reports.

a. A CIA officer passed an assassination weapon to an Agency Cuban asset at a meeting in Paris on 22 November 1963. The weapon was a ballpoint pen rigged as a hypodermic syringe.

[redacted]

[redacted]

The CIA officer suggested that the Cuban asset load the syringe with Black Leaf 40. The evidence indicates that the meeting was under way at the very moment President Kennedy was shot.

b. There was a meeting of the Special Group (Augmented) in Secretary Rusk's conference room on 10 August 1962 at which Secretary McNamara broached the subject of liquidation of Cuban leaders. The discussion resulted in a Project MONGOOSE action memorandum prepared by Edward Lansdale. At another Special Group meeting on 31 July 1964 there was discussion of a recently-disseminated Clandestine Services information report on a Cuban exile plot to assassinate Castro. CIA had refused the exile's request for funds and had no involvement in the plot.

c. CIA twice (first in early 1961 and again in early 1962) supplied lethal pills to U.S. gambling syndicate members working in behalf of CIA on a plot to assassinate Fidel Castro. The 1961 plot aborted and the pills were recovered. Those furnished in April 1962 were passed by the gambling syndicate representative to a Cuban exile leader in Florida, who in turn had them sent to Cuba about May 1962. In June 1962 the exile leader reported that a team of three men had been dispatched to Cuba to recruit for the operation. If the opportunity presented itself, the team would make an attempt on Castro's life--perhaps using the pills.

[redacted]

[redacted]

This report describes these and other episodes in detail; puts them into perspective; and reveals, that while the events described by Drew Pearson did occur and are subject to being patched together as though one complete story, the implication of a direct, causative relationship among them is unfounded.

[redacted]

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Miscellaneous Schemes Prior to August 1960

[redacted]

Miscellaneous Schemes Prior to August 1960

March to August 1960

We find evidence of at least three, and perhaps four, schemes that were under consideration well before the Bay of Pigs, but we can fix the time frame only speculatively. Those who have some knowledge of the episodes guessed at dates ranging from 1959 through 1961. The March-to-August span we have fixed may be too narrow, but it best fits the limited evidence we have.

a.. None of those we interviewed who was first assigned to the Cuba task force after the Bay of Pigs knows of any of these schemes.

b. [redacted]

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c. [redacted]

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Aerosol Attack on Radio Station

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[redacted] TSD, remembers discussion of a scheme to contaminate the air of the radio studio where Castro broadcast his speeches with an aerosol spray of a chemical that produces reactions similar to those of lysergic acid (LSD). Nothing came of the idea. [redacted] said he had discouraged the scheme, because the chemical could not be relied upon to be effective. [redacted]

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Contaminated Cigars

During this period [redacted] a box of cigars that had been treated with some sort of chemical. In our first interview with him, his recollection was that the chemical was intended to produce temporary personality disorientation. The thought was to somehow contrive to have Castro smoke one before making a speech and then to make a public spectacle of himself. [redacted] b3 b1

In a second interview with [redacted] we mentioned that we had learned since first speaking with him of a scheme to cause Castro's beard to fall out. [redacted] b1 b3

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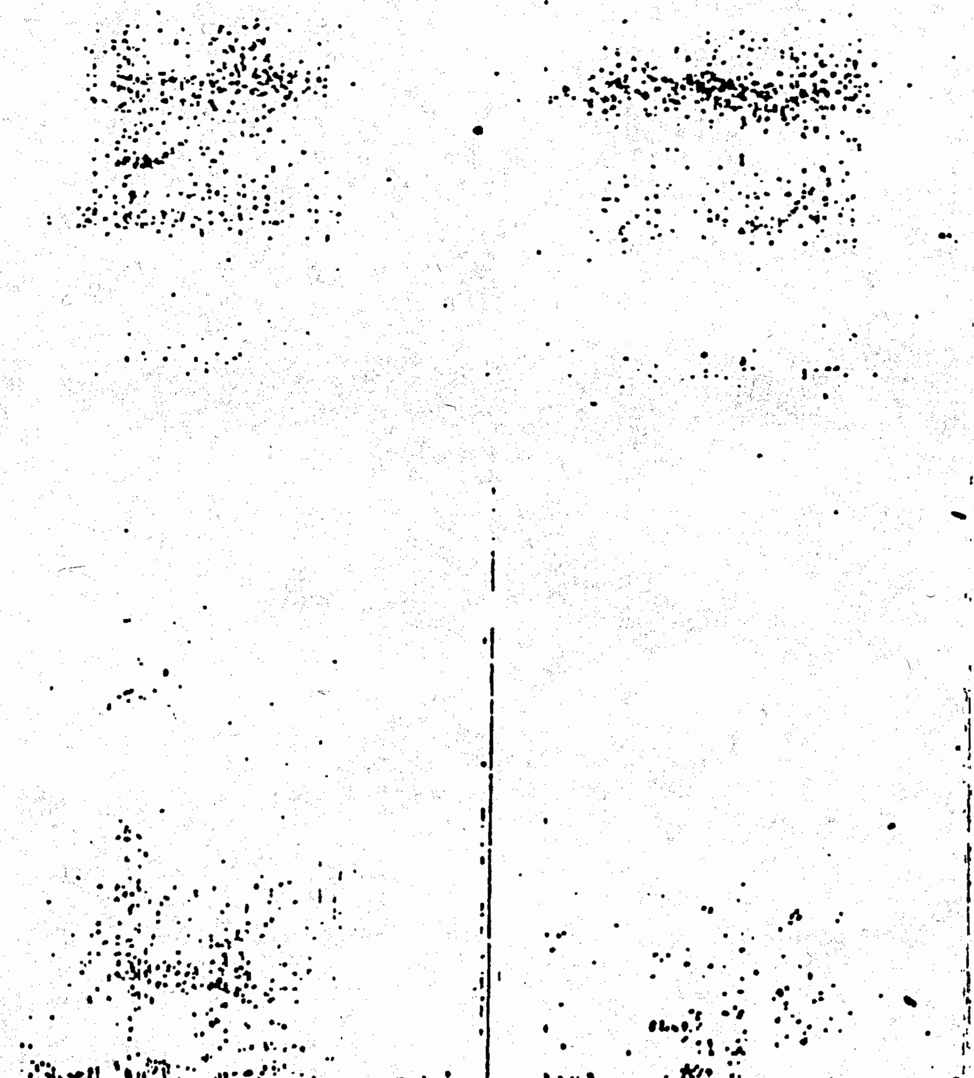
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Depilatory

[redacted] a scheme involving thallium salts, a chemical used by women as a depilatory--the thought being to destroy Castro's image as "The Beard" by causing the beard to fall out. b1 b3

[redacted] believes that the idea originated in connection with a trip Castro was to have made outside of Cuba. The idea was to dust thallium powder into Castro's shoes when they were put out at night to be shined. The scheme progressed as far as procuring the chemical and testing it on animals. [redacted] recollection is that Castro did not make the intended trip, and the scheme fell through. [redacted] b1 b3

[redacted]



... Gambling Syndicate • Phase 1

[redacted]

Gambling Syndicate

The first seriously-pursued CIA plan to assassinate Castro had its inception in August 1960. It involved the use of members of the criminal underworld with contacts inside Cuba. The operation had two phases: the first ran from August 1960 until late April or early May 1961, when it was called off following the Bay of Pigs; the second ran from April 1962 until February 1963 and was merely a revival of the first phase which had been inactive since about May 1961.

Gambling Syndicate - Phase 1

August 1960

Richard Bissell, Deputy Director for Plans, asked Sheffield Edwards, Director of Security, if Edwards could establish contact with the U.S. gambling syndicate that was active in Cuba. The objective clearly was the assassination of Castro although Edwards claims that there was a studied avoidance of the term in his conversation with Bissell. Bissell recalls that the idea originated with J. C. King, then Chief of WH Division, although King now recalls having had only limited knowledge of such a plan and at a much later date--about mid-1962.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Edwards consulted Robert A. Maheu, a private investigator who had done sensitive work for the Agency, to see if Maheu had any underworld contacts. Maheu was once a special agent of the FBI. He opened a private office in Washington in 1956. [redacted] of the Office of Security (and also a former Special Agent with the FBI), knew Maheu and knew that his business was having a shaky start financially. [redacted] arranged to subsidize Maheu to the extent of $500 per month. Within six months Maheu was doing so well financially that he suggested that the retainer be discontinued. Over the years he has been intimately involved in providing support for some of the Agency's more sensitive operations. [redacted]

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Maheu acknowledged that he had a contact who might furnish access to the criminal underworld, but Maheu was most reluctant to allow himself to be involved in such an assignment. He agreed to

[redacted]

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participate [redacted] Maheu identified his contact as one Johnny Roselli, who lived in Los Angeles and had the concession for the ice-making machines on "the strip" in Las Vegas and whom Maheu understood to be a member of the syndicate. Maheu was known to Roselli as a man who had a number of large business organizations as clients. [redacted] Maheu agreed that Maheu would approach Roselli as the representative of businessmen with interests in Cuba who saw the elimination of Castro as the essential first step to the recovery of their investments. Maheu was authorized to tell Roselli that his "clients" were willing to pay $150,000 for Castro's removal.

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September 1960

Shef Edwards named as his case officer for the operation [redacted] then Chief, Operational Support Division, Office of Security. [redacted] and Maheu met Roselli in New York City on 14 September 1960 where Maheu made the pitch. Roselli initially was also reluctant to become involved, but finally agreed to introduce Maheu to "Sam Gold" who either had or could arrange contacts with syndicate elements in Cuba who might handle the job. Roselli said he had no interest in being paid for his participation and believed that "Gold" would feel the

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[redacted]

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same way. A memorandum for the record prepared by Sheffield Edwards on 14 May 1962 states: "No monies were ever paid to Roselli and Giancana. Maheu was paid part of his expense money during the periods that he was in Miami." (Giancana is "Gold.")

The Support Chief [redacted] was introduced (in true name) to Roselli as an employee of Maheu, the explanation being that the support chief [redacted] would handle the case for Maheu, because Maheu was too busy to work on it full time himself. No one else in the Office of Security was made witting of the operation at this time. Edwards himself did not meet Roselli until the summer of 1962. b3 b3

At this point, about the second half of September, Shef Edwards told Bissell that he had a friend, a private investigator, who had a contact who in turn had other contacts through whom syndicate elements in Cuba could be reached. These syndicate elements in Cuba would be willing to take on such an operation. As of the latter part of September 1960, Edwards, The Support Chief [redacted] and Bissell were the only ones in the Agency who knew of a plan against Castro involving U.S. gangster elements. Edwards states that Richard Helms was not informed of the plan, because Cuba was being handled by Bissell at that time. b3

With Bissell present, Edwards briefed the Director (Allen Dulles) and the DDCI (General Cabell) on the existence of a plan involving members of the syndicate. The discussion was circumspect; Edwards

[redacted]

[redacted]

deliberately avoided the use of any "bad words." The descriptive term used was "an intelligence operation." Edwards is quite sure that the DCI and the DDCI clearly understood the nature of the operation he was discussing. He recalls describing the channel as being "from A to B to C." As he then envisioned it, "A" was Maheu, "B" was Roselli, and "C" was the principal in Cuba. Edwards recalls that Mr. Dulles merely nodded, presumably in understanding and approval. Certainly, there was no opposition. Edwards states that, while there was no formal approval as such, he felt that he clearly had tacit approval to use his own judgment. Bissell committed $150,000 for the support of the operation.

(Comment: In the light of this description of the briefing, it is appropriate to conjecture as to just what the Director did approve. It is safe to conclude, given the men participating and the general subject of the meeting, that there was little likelihood of misunderstanding--even though the details were deliberately blurred and the specific intended result was never stated in unmistakable language. It is also reasonable to conclude that the pointed avoidance of "bad words" emphasized to the participants the extreme sensitivity of the operation.)

During the week of 25 September 1960, the Support Chief [redacted] and Maheu went to Miami where Roselli introduced only Maheu to "Sam Gold" at a meeting b3

[redacted]

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in the Fontainbleau Hotel. "Gold" said he had a man, whom he identified only as "Joe," who would serve as courier to Cuba and make arrangements there. Maheu pointed out "Gold" to (*) [redacted] b3 from a distance, but (*) [redacted] never met either "Gold" or "Joe." b3 He did, however, learn their true identities. An Office of Security memorandum to the DDCI of 24 June 1966 places the time as "several weeks later." (*) [redacted] b3 Maheu and (*) [redacted] were staying at separate hotels. Maheu phoned (*) [redacted] one Sunday morning and called his attention to the Parade supplement in one of that morning's Miami newspapers. It carried an article on the Cosa Nostra, with pictures of prominent members. The man Maheu and (*) [redacted] knew as b3 "Sam Gold" appeared as Mom Salvatore (Sam) Giancana, a Chicago-based gangster. "Joe, the courier" (who was never identified to either Maheu or (*) [redacted] in any other way) turned out to be Santos Trafficante, b3 the Cosa Nostra chieftain in Cuba.

At that time the gambling casinos were still operating in Cuba, and Trafficante was making regular trips between Miami and Havana on syndicate business. (The casinos were closed and gambling was banned effective 7 January 1959. On 13 January 1959, Castro announced that the casinos would be permitted to reopen for tourists and foreigners

(*) the support chief

[redacted]

[redacted]

but that Cubans would be barred. The cabinet on 17 February 1959 authorized reopening the casinos for the tourist trade. Time magazine for 2 March 1959 announced that the casinos had been reopened the previous week. The New York Times issue of 30 September 1961 announced that the last of the casinos still running had been closed.) Trafficante was to make the arrangements with one of his contacts inside Cuba on one of his trips to Havana.

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[redacted] Operations Division, Office of Medical Services, has a notation that on 16 August 1960 [redacted] a box of Cuban cigars to be treated with a lethal material. He understood them to be Fidel's favorite brand, [redacted] He does not, in fact, remember Gunn as the supplier of any cigars. He is positive, though, that he did contaminate a full box of fifty cigars with botulinum toxin, a virulent poison that

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produces a fatal illness some hours after it is ingested. [redacted] merely putting one in the mouth would do the job; the intended victim would not actually have to smoke it.

The official's [redacted] notes show that he reported the cigars as being ready for delivery on 7 October 1960. His [redacted] notes do not show actual delivery until 13 February 1961. [redacted]

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tying it to a recollection that Castro frequently drank tea, coffee, or bouillon, for which a liquid poison would be particularly well suited.

January - February 1961

Despite the decision that a poison in liquid form would be most desirable, what was actually prepared and delivered was a solid in the form of small pills about the size of saccharine tablets. [redacted] remembers meeting with Edwards and (*) [redacted] in Edwards' office to discuss the requirement. The specifications were that the poison be stable, soluble, safe to handle, undetectable, not immediately acting, and with a firmly predictable end result. Botulin comes nearest to meeting all of those requirements, and it may be put up in either liquid or solid form. [redacted] states that the pill form was chosen because of ease and safety of handling.

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(Comment: The gangsters may have had some influence on the choice of a means of assassination. (*) [redacted] says that in his very early discussions with the gangsters (or, more precisely, Maheu's discussions with them) consideration was given to possible ways of accomplishing the mission. Apparently the Agency had first thought in terms of a typical, gangland-style killing in which Castro would be gunned down. Giancana was flatly opposed to the

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use of firearms. He said that no one could be recruited to do the job, because the chance of survival and escape would be negligible. Giancana stated a preference for a lethal pill that could be put into Castro's food or drink. Trafficante ("Joe, the courier") was in touch with a disaffected Cuban official with access to Castro and presumably of a sort that would enable him to surreptitiously poison Castro. The gangsters named their man inside as [redacted] who was then [redacted] b1 b3

The gangsters said that [redacted] had once been in a position to receive kickbacks from the gambling interests, had since lost that source of income, and needed the money.)

When Edwards received the pills he dropped one into a glass of water to test it for solubility and found that it did not even disintegrate, let alone dissolve. [redacted] took them back and made up a new batch that met the requirement for solubility. Edwards at that point wanted assurance that the pills were truly lethal. He called on [redacted] to make an independent test of them. Edwards gave [redacted] money to buy guinea pigs as test animals. [redacted] has a record of a conversation with [redacted] on 6 February 1961. It may have related to the tests, but we cannot be sure. What appears to have happened is that [redacted] tested the pills on the guinea pigs and found them ineffective.

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[redacted] states that tests of botulin on guinea pigs are not valid, because guinea pigs have a high resistance to this particular toxin. [redacted] himself tested the pills on monkeys and found they did the job expected of them.

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Late February - March 1961

Roselli passed the pills to Trafficante. Roselli reported to [redacted] (*) that the pills had been delivered to [redacted] (**) in Cuba. [redacted] (**) is understood to have kept the pills for a couple of weeks before returning them. According to the gangsters, [redacted] (**) got cold feet.

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(*) the Support Chief

(**) Cuban official

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(*) [redacted] lost his position in the Prime Minister's Office [redacted] while planning for the operation was still going on [redacted]

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(*) The Cuban official

[redacted]

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March - April 1961

Following the collapse of the (*) [redacted] channel, Roselli told b1,b3 (**) [redacted] that Trafficante knew of a man high up in the Cuban exile b3 movement who might do the job. (***) [redacted] b1, b3 [redacted] was the head of the b1,b3 [redacted] a group supported by the Agency [redacted] understood that [redacted] (***) b1, b3 was dissatisfied with the nature and the extent of this support [redacted] b1,b3

(Comment: Reports from the FBI suggest how Trafficante may have known of (***) [redacted] On 21 December 1960 the Bureau forwarded b1,b3 to the Agency a memorandum reporting that efforts were being made by U.S. racketeers to finance anti-Castro activities [redacted] b1,b3 A later report of 18 January 1961 associates (***) [redacted] with those schemes. (***) [redacted] b1,b3

(*) Cuban official

(**) Support Chief

(***) Cuban exile l[redacted] b1,b3
leader

[redacted]

[redacted] Edward K. Moss, a Washington public relations counselor, [redacted] The Cellini brothers were believed to be in touch with [redacted](*) through Moss and were reported to have offered [redacted](*) large sums of money for his operations against Castro, with the understanding that they would receive privileged treatment "in the Cuba of the future." [redacted] b3

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(*) Cuban exile leader

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Trafficante approached (*) [redacted] and told him that he had clients who wanted to do away with Castro and that they would pay big money for the job. (*) [redacted] is reported to have been very receptive, since it would mean that he would be able to buy his own ships, arms, and communications equipment.

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(Comment: By this time Roselli had become certain that (**) [redacted] was an Agency employee, not a subordinate of Maheu. He told (**) [redacted] that he was sure that (**) [redacted] was "a government man - CIA" but that (**) [redacted] should not confirm this to him. Roselli said that as a loyal American he would do whatever he could and would never divulge the operation.)

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(*) Cuban exile leader

(**) Support Chief

[redacted]

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dated 24 June 1966, sets the amount as $10,000 in cash and $1,000 (*) worth of communications equipment. [redacted] who signed the vouchers for the funds, recalls the amounts as being those stated in the Office of Security memorandum. b3

[redacted] b1 b3

[redacted] (**) took the pills from his safe and delivered them and the money to Roselli. Roselli gave the pills and the money to [redacted] whom Roselli dealt with under pseudonym. [redacted] was believed to have an asset inside Cuba in a position to slip a pill to Castro. [redacted] recalls something about a contact who worked in a restaurant frequented by Castro and who was to receive the pills and put them into Castro's food or drink. [redacted] believes that the scheme failed because Castro ceased to visit that particular restaurant. b3 b3 b1,b3 b3 b3

(*) the person
(**) the support chief

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Gambling Syndicate - Phase 2

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Gambling Syndicate - Phase 2

William Harvey, Chief [redacted] was briefed in February 1961 (by authority of Richard Bissell) on phase one of the gambling syndicate operation. That briefing was in connection with a sensitive operation that Bissell had assigned to Harvey. Harvey describes it thus: Early in the Kennedy administration, Bissell called him in to discuss what Harvey refers to as an Executive Action Capability; i.e., a general stand-by capability to carry out assassinations when required. Harvey's notes quote Bissell as saying, "The White House has twice urged me to create such a capability." Bissell recalls discussing the question of developing a general capability with Harvey. He mentioned the Edwards/gambling syndicate operation against Castro in that context, but he now thinks that the operation was over by then and that reference to it was in terms of a past operation as a case in point. It was on this basis that Harvey arranged to be briefed by Edwards. Harvey's fixing of the date as February was only after review of events both preceding the briefing and following it. He says now that it might have been as early as late January or as late as March 1961.

After some discussion of the problems involved in developing an Executive Action Capability, Bissell placed Harvey in charge of the effort. Harvey says that Bissell had already discussed certain aspects

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of the problem with [redacted] Since [redacted] was already cut in, Harvey used him in developing the Executive Action Capability, although never with respect to Castro. We did not question [redacted] on his knowledge of the program for creating an Executive Action Capability, but Harvey's mention of him in this connection may explain a notation by [redacted] that Harvey instructed [redacted] to discuss techniques with [redacted] without associating the discussion with the Castro operation.

Harvey states that after the decision was made to go ahead with the creating of an Executive Action Capability, and while he was still discussing its development with Bissell, he briefed Mr. Helms fully on the general concept but without mention of the then ongoing plan to assassinate Castro.

The Executive Action program came to be known as ZRRIFLE. Its principal asset was an agent, QJWIN, who had been recruited earlier by [redacted] for use in a special operation in the Congo ~~(the assassination of Patrice Lumumba)~~ to be run by [redacted] made a survey of the scene, decided he wanted no part in an assassination attempt, and asked to be released--which Bissell granted.) The project name, ZRRIFLE, first appears in the files in May 1961, although the first recorded approval is dated 19 February 1962. The new DD/P (Helms) on that date authorized Harvey, by

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[redacted]

memorandum, to handle the project on a special basis. Accounting for expenditures was to be by general category and on Harvey's certification. The initial approval was for $14,700, consisting of $7,200 for QJWIN's annual salary and $7,500 for operational expenses.

Project ZRRIFLE was covered as an [redacted] operation (ostensibly to develop a capability for entering safes and for kidnapping couriers). It continued on a course separate from the Edwards/gambling syndicate operation against Castro until 15 November 1961. Harvey has a note that on that date he discussed with Bissell the application of the ZRRIFLE program to Cuba. Harvey says that Bissell instructed him to take over Edwards' contact with the criminal syndicate and thereafter to run the operation against Castro. Harvey adds that, as a completely unrelated development, shortly after this discussion with Bissell he was told by Helms that he was to be placed in charge of the Agency's Cuba task force.

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Late 1961 - Early 1962

Harvey recalls that he was very busy with a number of things in the period that followed the discussion with Bissell that led to his taking over Edwards' Castro operation. He was turning over his responsibilities [redacted] He was working with NSA on the Martin/Mitchell defection case. He was reading in on Cuba operations and

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

was engaged in daily meetings concerning them. [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] Harvey added that, when he briefed Helms on Roselli, he obtained Helms' approval not to brief the Director.)

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a. Edwards believes that the operation was called off completely after the Bay of Pigs and that there was no further operational activity in connection with it until Harvey met Roselli and reactivated the operation in April 1962. [redacted] (*) introduced Harvey to Roselli, and Edwards had nothing further to do with the operation--with the exception of a meeting with Attorney General Robert Kennedy in connection with the Phyllis McGuire wiretapping incident. (The wiretapping incident is described in a separate section of this report.) Edwards' records show that on 14 May 1962 Harvey called Edwards "and indicated that he was dropping any plans for the use of Roselli for the future." b3

b. Harvey's recollection of the turnover tends to support Edwards' summary, but he claims that he took over "a going operation." Some support for this claim is found in his description

(*) the support chief

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted] b1 b3

(*) c. [redacted] account of his own role in the operation in the early weeks following Harvey's supposed takeover makes it evident that there was not a clean break between the Office of Security's responsibility and that of Harvey. Further, [redacted](*) b3 now believes that there must have been "something going on" between April 1961 (after the Bay of Pigs) and April 1962, but he claims to be unable to remember any of the particulars.

[redacted] b1 b3

Harvey's notes show that he and [redacted](*) went to New York City b3 to meet Roselli on the 8th and 9th of April 1962. [redacted] b1 b3

(*) the Support Chief

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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a. [redacted]

b. [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

does have a notation of delivering four pills (one capsule and three tablets) to [redacted](*) on 18 April 1962. [redacted]

Harvey says that he arrived in Miami on 21 April 1962 and found Roselli already in touch with [redacted] the Cuban exile leader who had participated in phase one. [redacted]

(*) the Support Chief

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted]
Giancana was not to be brought in on the reactivation of the operation, and he believes that Roselli honored the request. Roselli once reported to Harvey that Giancana had asked if anything was going on, and when Roselli said that nothing was happening, Giancana said, "Too bad." Additionally, Santos Trafficante ("Joe, the courier" from the earlier phase) was no longer involved. With the closing of the last casino in Havana in September 1961, Trafficante presumably no longer had access. Roselli now had a man known to Harvey as Maceo, [redacted] b1, b3

[redacted] b1 b3

[redacted] Roselli remained as a prominent figure in the operation, but working directly with the Cuban exile community and directly on behalf of CIA. [redacted] b1 b3

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Roselli needed Giancana and Trafficante in the first phase as a means of establishing contacts inside Cuba. He did not need them in the second phase, because he had (*) [redacted] However, it would be naive to assume that Roselli did not take the precaution of informing higher-ups in the syndicate that he was working in a territory considered to be the private domain of someone else in the syndicate.) b1 b3

When the pills were given to (*) [redacted] through Roselli, (*) [redacted] requested arms and equipment needed for the support of his end of the operation. Roselli passed the request to Harvey. Harvey, with the help of (**) [redacted] the chief of the JMWAVE Station, procured explosives, detonators, [redacted] rifles, [redacted] hand guns, [redacted] radios, and [redacted] boat radar. [redacted] The cost of the arms and equipment, about $5,000, [redacted] b1, b3

Harvey and (**) [redacted] rented a U-Haul truck under an assumed name, loaded it with the arms and equipment, and parked it in the parking lot [redacted] The keys were then given to Roselli for b3

(*) the Cuban exile leader

(**) the chief of the JMWAVE Station [redacted] b3

[redacted]

delivery [redacted] Roselli, accompanied by (*) [redacted] did the same.(**) Neither pair knew that the other was watching. Eventually the truck was picked up and driven away. It was returned later, empty, and with the keys under the seat as prearranged. Harvey returned it to the rental agency. Harvey says that (***) [redacted] never knew to whom delivery was made nor for what purpose. [redacted]

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May 1962

Harvey and Roselli arranged a system of telephone communication by which Harvey was kept posted on any developments. [redacted] Roselli reported that the pills were in Cuba and at the restaurant reportedly used regularly by Castro.

b1 b3

(*) the Support chief

(**) i.e., watched the delivery from across the street.

(***) the chief of the JMWAVE Station

[redacted]

b3

[redacted]

June 1962

Roselli reported to Harvey on 21 June that (*) [redacted] had dispatched a team of three men to Cuba. Just what they were supposed to do is pretty vague. Harvey said that they appeared to have no specific plan for killing Castro. They were to recruit others who might be used in such a scheme. If an opportunity to kill Castro presented itself, they or the persons they recruited were to make the attempt--perhaps using the pills. [redacted]

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September 1962

Harvey saw Roselli in Miami on 7 and on 11 September. (*) [redacted] was reported as then ready to send in another team of three men. They were supposedly militia men whose assignment was to penetrate Castro's body guard. During this period the "medicine" was reported as still in place and the three men of the first team safe.

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[redacted]

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(*) the Cuban exile leader

[redacted]

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[redacted]

they did not actually leave. First, "conditions inside" were given as the reason for delay; then the October missile crisis threw plans awry. Harvey was in Miami between 22 December and 6 January. He saw both Roselli and Maceo several times during that period. He made a payment of $2,700 to Roselli for passing to [redacted] (*) for the expenses of the three militia men. Harvey and Roselli had telephone discussions of the operation between 11 and 16 January. Harvey says that Roselli wasn't kidding himself. He agreed with Harvey that nothing was happening and that there was not much chance that anything would happen in the future. As far as Harvey knows, the three militia men never did leave for Cuba. [redacted] b1, b3

February 1963

[redacted] b1, b3

Harvey left [redacted] to meet with Roselli in Los Angeles. They agreed at the Los Angeles meeting that the operation would be closed off, [redacted] Roselli agreed that he would continue b1, b3

(*) the Cuban exile leader

[redacted]

[redacted]

It subsequently developed that the FBI had Roselli under intensive surveillance at the time, and Harvey speculates that he was picked up as he left the airport parking lot and was identified through his auto license number. Harvey met Papich for breakfast the next morning and explained that he was terminating an operational association with Roselli. Papich reminded Harvey of the FBI rule requiring FBI personnel to report any known contacts between former FBI employees and criminal elements. Papich said that he would have to report to J. Edgar Hoover that Harvey had been seen with Roselli. Harvey said he understood Papich's situation and did not object to such a report being made. Harvey said that he asked Papich to inform him in advance if it appeared that Hoover might call Mr. McCone--Harvey's point being that he felt that McCone should be briefed before receiving a call from Hoover. Papich agreed to do so. Harvey said that he then told Mr. Helms of the incident and that Helms agreed that there was no need to brief McCone unless a call from Hoover was to be expected.

This was Harvey's last face-to-face meeting with Roselli, although he has heard from him since then. The later links between Harvey and Roselli are described in a separate section of this report.

The list of persons witting of the second phase of the operation differs from those who knew of the first phase. Those we have identified are:

[redacted]

[redacted]

1. Richard Helms, Deputy Director for Plans

2. William Harvey, Chief, Task Force W

3. [redacted] Office of Security (He knows that Harvey took over the operation and delivered pills, arms, and equipment in April 1962. He does not know of developments after May 1962.)

4. Sheffield Edwards, Director of Security (He knows of the fact of the turnover to Harvey, but states he knows nothing of developments thereafter.)

5. J. C. King, Chief, WH Division (He stated in our interview with him that he knew that Harvey was having meetings with members of the gambling syndicate in 1962.)

6. [redacted]

7. [redacted] Chief, JMWAVE (He assisted Harvey in the delivery of arms and equipment to [redacted] in April 1962, but presumably did not know the identities of the recipients nor the purpose for which the material was to be used.)

8. [redacted] TSD ([redacted] participation was limited to furnishing the pills to [redacted] on 18 April 1962.)

9. [redacted] the Cuban exile leader (He presumably was not aware of government sponsorship.)

10. [redacted]

11. Maceo, Roselli's "man" (Maceo probably knew there was a government connection, but may not have identified CIA as the agency.)

We can only conjecture as to who else may have known at least that the operation was continuing and perhaps some of the details. Sam

[redacted]

[redacted]

Giancana was supposedly cut out of the second phase, but we cannot be sure that Roselli did not keep him informed. The same may be said of Santos Trafficante. [redacted]

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The Wimtenning Incident

[redacted]

The Wiretapping Incident

Late 1961 - Early 1962

Well after the Pre-Bay of Pigs phase of the gambling syndicate operation to assassinate Castro, and only indirectly related to it, a development in the private life of Sam Giancana led to an incident that made the FBI aware of the Agency's relationship with the syndicate and required the briefing of the Attorney General on the details of the assassination plan.

Phyllis McGuire, of the singing McGuire sisters, was and is openly known to be Giancana's mistress. Giancana suspected her of having an affair with Dan Rowan, of the Rowan and Martin comedy team. Both Rowan and Miss McGuire were then entertaining in Las Vegas, and Giancana asked Maheu to put a bug in Rowan's room. Maheu did not want to do the job and declined on the grounds that he wasn't equipped for that sort of work. Giancana made a claim for a return favor: he had worked on the Castro assassination operation for Maheu, and Maheu was indebted to him. Giancana said that if Maheu wouldn't take on the job, he, Giancana, would go to Las Vegas and do it himself. Maheu agreed to arrange to have the room bugged.

(Comment: The exact date of this is uncertain. An August 1963 item on Giancana in the Chicago Sun-Times refers to the incident, without mention of wiretapping, and sets the year as

[redacted]

[redacted]

1961. There is nothing in Agency files that pinpoints the date, and the memories of those we interviewed who know of the incident are hazy. Edwards and (*) [redacted] did not learn of the incident until after it had happened. Edwards can place it only as being after the Bay of Pigs. (*) [redacted] at first thought that it was in early 1962. When shown the newspaper account, (*) [redacted] said that if the news story was correct, it would have had to have been very late in 1961. An Office of Security memorandum to the DDCI, of 24 June 1966, states that it was "at the height of the project negotiations." This is confusing, rather than clarifying, because the operation was supposedly at dead standstill in late 1961 and very early 1962. Clearly the incident occurred before 7 February 1962, because it was on that date that the Director of Security told the FBI that CIA would object to prosecution. Presumably the FBI's case was already complete by then.)

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Maheu arranged to have Giancana's request handled by Edward L. Du Bois, a private investigator in Miami. Du Bois assigned two men to the job: Arthur J. Balletti and J. W. Harrison.

(Comment: The September 1966 classified telephone directory for the Greater Miami Area lists Edward L. Du Bois under "Detective Agencies." There is an advertisement on the page for "Arthur J. Balletti Investigations" which lists as one of

(*) the Support Chief

[redacted]

[redacted]

his specialties the obtaining of photographic and electronic evidence.)

[redacted] (*) recalls that, instead of planting a microphone in Rowan's room, the investigator tapped the telephone, which would not have revealed the sort of intimacies that Giancana expected to discover. When Rowan left the room to do a show, Balletti also left his room to see the act, leaving his equipment out in full sight and running. It was found by a maid, and the local sheriff's office was called. Balletti was arrested. Harrison was not picked up. Agency personnel have no further information about Harrison. The FBI identified him only as being "supplied by Maheu." b3

Balletti first tried to telephone Du Bois for help but could not reach him. He then called Maheu, in the presence of the sheriff's officers. [redacted] (*) says that Maheu was able to fix the matter with local Las Vegas authorities, perhaps with help from Roselli. However, Balletti's call to Maheu caused the case to reach the FBI. The Bureau decided to press for prosecution under the wiretapping statute. When Maheu was approached by the FBI, he referred them to the CIA Director of Security, Sheffield Edwards. b3

(Comment: Edwards states that he had told Maheu, who had to work closely with the thugs, that if he got into a bind with the FBI, he could tell the Bureau that he was working on an

(*) the Support Chief

[redacted]

[redacted]

intelligence operation being handled by Edwards. Maheu, according to Edwards, told the Bureau that he had not personally done the wiretapping, but that it grew out of an operation he was working on with Edwards. Maheu presumably did not mention the ultimate objective of the "intelligence operation" involving the gambling syndicate. [redacted]

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March 1962

The 23 March memorandum from the Bureau takes the form of a letter of confirmation of a 7 February meeting between an unnamed representative of the FBI and Shef Edwards. The memorandum quotes Edwards as having made the following points: Maheu was involved in a sensitive operation with the Agency; the Agency would object to any prosecution that would necessitate use of CIA personnel or information;

[redacted]

[redacted]

and introduction of evidence concerning CIA operations would embarrass the Government. This is also essentially as stated to us by Edwards in reviewing the incident during the course of this investigation.

The 23 March memorandum stated that the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice requested that CIA advise specifically if it objected to initiation of criminal prosecution against Balletti, Maheu, and Harrison. On 28 or 29 March, Edwards met with the Bureau liaison officer, Sam Papich, and told him that any prosecution would endanger sensitive sources and methods used in a duly authorized project and would not be in the national interest. Papich accepted Edwards' oral statement as the reply requested and said that he would report to proper authorities in the Bureau. Edwards made a record of the meeting in a memorandum of 4 April 1962.

[redacted]

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April 1962

In early April Papich informed Edwards that Herbert J. Miller,

[redacted]

[redacted]

Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice, wanted to discuss the case. Edwards then brought in Lawrence Houston, General Counsel, and asked Houston to call on Miller and tell him that the bugging incident in Las Vegas was related to an intelligence operation and that the Agency did not think it wise at that time to surface its connection with Roselli.

Houston met with Miller on 16 April and told him of the Agency's involvement, without revealing any details of the assassination operation. Houston's memorandum of the meeting, dated 26 April, quotes Miller as saying that he foresaw no major difficulty in stopping prosecution, but that he might mention the problem to the Attorney General. Houston's memorandum notes that Miller raised a question about the possibility of our involvement in this particular case, the Las Vegas wiretap, standing in the way of prosecution of other actions, particularly against Giancana.

Houston's 26 April memorandum states that on 20 April there was a second meeting with Justice--with Miller's first assistant, Mr. Foley. At that meeting Houston told Foley that the Agency's request not to prosecute was limited to this specific bugging incident, was based on security grounds, and that security considerations would not be a bar to prosecution on other matters. As it was possible that the Attorney General might be told about this and might then call the DCI, Houston

[redacted]

[redacted]

briefed the DDCI, General Carter, who said he understood the situation and in due time might brief the Director, Mr. McCone. It is not known whether General Carter did or did not brief Mr. McCone. There is no indication that General Carter was further briefed on the full details of the assassination plot against Castro.

May 1962

The Attorney General obviously was told of CIA's operational involvement with gangster elements, because he requested a briefing on the details. On 7 May 1962 Sheffield Edwards and Lawrence Houston met with Attorney General Robert Kennedy and, as Edwards puts it, "briefed him all the way." Houston says that after the briefing Kennedy "thought about the problem quite seriously." The Attorney General said that he could see the problem and that he could not proceed against those involved in the wiretapping case. He spoke quite firmly, saying in effect, "I trust that if you ever try to do business with organized crime again--with gangsters--you will let the Attorney General know before you do it." Houston quotes Edwards as replying that this was a reasonable request. Edwards says that among the points covered was that of Roselli's motivation. The Attorney General had thought that Roselli was doing the job (the attempt at assassination of Castro) for money. Edwards corrected that impression; he was not.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

Houston recalls that during the meeting with the Attorney General the latter asked for a memorandum record of the meeting. Edwards believes that the request was made later and by telephone. A memorandum was prepared and was signed by Edwards. Both Edwards and Houston recall having had a hand in writing it. A transmittal buck-slip from Houston to Kennedy notes that the request was made on 11 May, which suggests that Edwards is correct in his belief that the request was made by telephone after the 7 May briefing of the Attorney General. The memorandum is dated 14 May 1962. It was typed in two copies only, with the original being sent to Attorney General Kennedy and the other copy being retained by the Director of Security. It was typed by Edwards' secretary, [redacted] It does not state the purpose of the operation on which Kennedy was briefed, but it does make it clear that the operation was against Castro and its true purpose may be inferred from the memorandum. b3

Edwards states that the briefing of the Attorney General and the forwarding of a memorandum of record was carried out without briefing the Director (John McCone), the DDCI (General Carter), or the DD/P (Richard Helms). He felt that, since they had not been privy to the operation when it was under way, they should be protected from involvement in it after the fact. As noted previously, Houston had briefed the DDCI on the fact that there was a matter involving the

[redacted]

[redacted]

Department of Justice, but Houston had not given the DDCI the specifics. He feels it would have been normal for him to have briefed the DCI in view of the Attorney General's interest, but he also feels quite sure that he would have remembered doing it and he does not. He suggested that Edwards' deliberate avoidance of such briefings may have led him also to avoid making any briefings. He recalls no disagreements with Edwards on this point and concludes that he must have accepted Edwards' decision not to brief.

Houston and Edwards briefed Robert Kennedy on a CIA operation embracing gangster elements, which presumably was terminated following the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Kennedy stated his view, reportedly quite strongly, that the Attorney General should be told in advance of any future CIA intentions to work with or through U.S. gangster elements. From reports of the briefing, it is reasonable to assume that Kennedy believed he had such a commitment from Agency representatives.

In fact, however, at the time of the 7 May 1962 briefing of the Attorney General on "Gambling Syndicate - Phase One," Phase Two under William Harvey was already well under way. Harvey had been introduced to Roselli on 8 April and [redacted] (*) or his men had received the lethal pills, the arms, and related support equipment in late April. The Attorney General was not told that the gambling syndicate operation had already been reactivated, nor, as far as we know, was he ever told

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(*) the Cuban exile leader

[redacted]

[redacted]

that CIA had a continuing involvement with U.S. gangster elements.

When the Attorney General was briefed on 7 May, Edwards knew that Harvey had been introduced to Roselli. He must also have known that his subordinate, (*) [redacted] was in Miami and roughly for what purpose (although Edwards does not now recall this). The gambling syndicate operation had been taken from him, and, in retrospect, he probably acted properly in briefing the Attorney General on only that aspect of the operation for which he had been responsible and of which he had direct, personal knowledge.

Harvey states that on 14 May he briefed Mr. Helms on the meeting with the Attorney General, as told to him by Edwards. Harvey, too, advised against briefing Mr. McCone and General Carter and states that Helms concurred in this. On that same date, 14 May, Edwards prepared a memorandum for the record stating that on that day Harvey had told him that any plans for future use of Roselli were dropped. Edwards' memorandum states that he "cautioned him (Harvey) that I (Edwards) felt that any future projects of this nature should have the tacit approval of the Director of Central Intelligence." Edwards informed us that he has no specific recollection of having told Harvey of Kennedy's warning that the Attorney General should be told in advance of any future CIA use of gangsters.

(*) the Support Chief

[redacted]

[redacted]

Although the Attorney General on 7 May 1962 was given a full and frank account of the Agency's relations with Maheu, Roselli, and Giancana in the Castro operation, including the wiretapping flap, it appears that the FBI was not given anything like the same detail. The Bureau quite properly was not told about the assassination operation, and it seems that it also was not told how the private life of Giancana came to involve the Agency in the Las Vegas wiretapping incident. Edwards states that to have briefed the Bureau on the assassination operation would have put it in an impossible bind, since both Roselli and Giancana were high on the Bureau's "list."

The briefing of Attorney General Kennedy was absolutely restricted to him, and we can only speculate that the confidence was observed. [redacted] b1 b3

Mr. Helms subsequently had lunch with Senator Kennedy. He took a

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If the information given the Bureau is as limited as the records and our information indicate, then the Bureau has not been informed, as the Attorney General was, that the Agency was first unwitting and then a reluctant accessory after the fact. It would be surprising, though, if the Bureau does not now know the whole story of the Las Vegas bugging incident. [redacted]

b5

August 1963

What is available to the press is undoubtedly available to the Bureau. In fact, some indication of the extent of the Bureau's knowledge is found in a feature story in the Chicago Sun-Times of 16 August 1963, with a Washington date line, under the banner lead:

"CIA SOUGHT GIANCANA HELP FOR CUBA SPYING"

The article cites "Justice Department sources" as expressing the belief that Giancana never did any spying at all for the CIA. He merely pretended to go along with the CIA:

> "in the hope that the Justice Department's drive to put him behind bars might be slowed - or at least affected - by his ruse of co-operation with another government agency."

The story places the period of the relationship from 1959 to:

[redacted]

[redacted]

"some time in 1960, long before the abortive rebel invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April, 1961."

The newspaper then gives the following version of the bugging incident:

"An equally bizarre episode months later gave the Justice Department its first clue to Giancana's negotiations with the CIA.

"The figures in this incident were a male night-club entertainer and Giancana's girl friend, Phyllis McGuire, one of the singing McGuire sisters.

"At the time, in Giancana's opinion, the entertainer was overly attentive to Miss McGuire.

"At Las Vegas, Nev., in 1961, sheriff's police seized a prowler in the entertainer's hotel suite. For hours, the intruder refused to identify himself or say he was rifling the entertainer's rooms.

"Persistent questioning by sheriff's deputies, according to federal authorities, led to an admission by the prowler that he was on the payroll of a private detective agency in Florida.

"Florida authorities sought an explanation of the incident from the operator of the detective agency. At first, the operator refused to discuss the matter. Finally, however, he told investigators to get in touch with the CIA.

"The inquiry then shifted from Florida to Washington and revealed Giancana's negotiations with CIA, it was disclosed.

"Government sources reported Thursday that the private investigator's mission in the Las Vegas suite of the entertainer was another riddle of the Giancana caper with the CIA. Neither CIA nor the Florida detective Agency ever has offered an explanation of what the investigator was doing in the Hotel suite, the sources said."

[redacted]

[redacted]

Four days later, on 20 August 1963, the Chicago Daily News reported further on the subject under the following headline:

"THE TRUTH ABOUT COSA NOSTRA CHIEF AND THE CIA"

The story cited an incident in which Giancana literally bumped into an FBI agent who was tailing him. Giancana was reported to have said, "Why don't you fellows leave me alone? I'm one of you!" Giancana is represented in the newspaper account as having been approached by--but not as having made any arrangements with--CIA. The story also mentions the Las Vegas incident, but in terms of someone, possibly CIA, ransacking a room occupied by one of Giancana's henchmen who had just returned from Cuba.

On 16 August 1963 the DD/P (Helms) sent a memorandum to the DCI (McCone) forwarding a copy of the 14 May 1962 memorandum for the record sent to Attorney General Kennedy following the 7 May 1962 briefing of Kennedy on the gambling syndicate operation - phase one. The coincidence of dates strongly suggests that the Director's interest resulted from the Chicago newspaper story of 16 August. In his transmittal memorandum to the DCI, Mr. Helms wrote that:

> ". . . I was vaguely aware of the existence of such a memorandum [the memorandum for the record of the 7 May 1962 briefing of Robert Kennedy] since I was informed that it had been written as a result of a briefing given by Colonel Edwards and Lawrence Houston to the Attorney General in May of last year. . . . . . I assume you are aware of the nature of the operation discussed in the attachment."

[redacted]

[redacted]

This is the earliest date on which we have evidence of Mr. McCone's being aware of any aspect of the scheme to assassinate Castro using members of the gambling syndicate.

Drew Pearson has access to these newspaper stories, and they are available to any number of sources who might wish to collect such information. The rumors of CIA's alliance with gangsters are not new; what is new is that the rumors now connect CIA and the gangsters in a plot to assassinate Castro. [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

May - July 1966

The Long Committee

The Agency's previous interventions on Maheu's behalf are reviewed here, because of the increasingly important role of Maheu in the scenario. The last of these interventions occurred during the period May - June 1966. At that time a Senate Committee headed by Senator Long of Missouri was investigating invasions of privacy and planned to call Maheu to testify. [redacted]

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[redacted]

one of the things Maheu did was to hire someone to run a technical surveillance on Onassis' offices, and this became known. Maheu's more recent involvement in the Las Vegas wiretapping incident also seemed certain to receive extensive attention by the Long Committee.

[redacted]

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[redacted] A number of meetings were held with Edward P. Morgan, Maheu's Washington attorney, and with a close legal associate of Senator Long, a St. Louis attorney named Morris Shenker. Finally, in direct meetings with Senator Long, our General Counsel was able to have Maheu excused from testifying before the Long Committee.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

on the Agency in a variety of ways--suggesting that publicity might expose his past sensitive work for CIA. [redacted]

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b. Maheu has now, on three separate occasions, seen CIA intervene in official proceedings--once for Niarchos and twice for Maheu.

[redacted]

Schemes in Early 1963

[redacted]

Schemes in Early 1963

Skin Diving Suit

At about the time of the Donovan-Castro negotiations for the release of the Bay of Pigs prisoners a plan was devised to have Donovan present a contaminated skin diving suit to Castro as a gift. Castro was known to be a skin diving enthusiast. We cannot put a precise date on this scheme. Desmond FitzGerald told us of it as if it had originated after he took over the Cuba task force in January 1963. [redacted] b3

According to [redacted] this scheme progressed to the point of actually buying a diving suit and readying it for delivery. The technique involved dusting the inside of the suit with a fungus that would produce a disabling and chronic skin disease (Madura foot) and contaminating the breathing apparatus with tubercle bacilli. [redacted] does not remember what came of the scheme or what happened to the scuba suit. [redacted] He later recalled that the plan was abandoned because it was overtaken by events: Donovan had already given Castro a skin diving suit on his own initiative. [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] says that he mentioned the plan to George McManus, then a special assistant to the DD/P (Helms). McManus later told Halpern that he had mentioned the scheme to Mr. Helms. Those who were involved in the plot or who were identified to us by the participants as being witting are the following:

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Richard Helms

William Harvey (denies any knowledge)

Desmond FitzGerald

[redacted]

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George McManus

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

Booby-trapped Sea Shell

Some time in 1963, date uncertain but probably early in the year, Desmond FitzGerald, then Chief, SAS, originated a scheme for doing away with Castro by means of an explosives-rigged sea shell. The idea was to take an unusually spectacular sea shell that would be certain to catch Castro's eye, load it with an explosive triggered to blow when the shell was lifted, and submerge it in an area where Castro often went skin diving.

Des bought two books on Caribbean Mollusca. The scheme was soon found to be impracticable. [redacted]

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[redacted] wrote in his contact report:

> ". . . . at one time when we [redacted] were discussing the various aspects of [redacted] future role in Cuba, we used the term 'assassinate.' The use of this term, we later learned [redacted] was most objectionable to the latter, and he was visibly upset. It was not the act he objected to, but rather merely the choice of the word used to describe it. 'Eliminate was acceptable.'"

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[redacted]

Desmond FitzGerald, then Chief, SAS, [redacted] b1 [redacted] arranged to meet with [redacted] to give him the assurances b1,b3

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he sought. The contact plan for the meeting, [redacted] has this to say on cover:

> FitzGerald will represent self as personal representative of Robert F. Kennedy who traveled [redacted] for specific purpose meeting [redacted] and giving him assurances of full U.S. support if there is change of the present government in Cuba.

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According to FitzGerald, he discussed the planned meeting with the DD/P (Helms) who decided it was not necessary to seek approval from Robert Kennedy for FitzGerald to speak in his name.

[redacted]

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[redacted] b5

(*)FitzGerald recalls that [redacted] spoke repeatedly of the need for an b1, b3 assassination weapon. In particular, he wanted a high-powered rifle with telescopic sights or some other weapon that could be used to kill Castro from a distance. FitzGerald wanted no part of such a scheme and told [redacted] to tell [redacted] (*) that the U.S. simply does not do such things. [redacted] b1, b3 b1, b3 FitzGerald says that when he met with [redacted] he told [redacted] that the U.S. Government would (*) have no part of an attempt on Castro's life. [redacted] b1 b3

(*) AMLASH

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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19 November 1963

Memorandum for the record prepared by [redacted] "C/SAS (FitzGerald) approved telling [redacted] (*) he would be given a cache inside Cuba. Cache could, if he requested it, include . . . high power rifles w/scopes . . . . [redacted] b3 b1 b3

[redacted]

[redacted] b1 b3

(*) AMLASH

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[redacted]

[redacted] b1 b3

[redacted] says that, while [redacted] (*) was anxious to do away with Castro, [redacted] (*) was not willing to sacrifice his own life in exchange for Castro's. [redacted] b1 b3

[redacted] Although none of the participants specifically so stated, it may be inferred that they were seeking a means of assassination of a sort that [redacted] (*) might reasonably have been expected to have devised himself. What they settled upon was Black Leaf 40, a common, easily-obtainable insecticide containing about 40% nicotine sulphate. Nicotine is a deadly poison that may be administered orally, by injection, or by absorption through the skin. [redacted] b1 b3

(*) AMLASH

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[redacted]

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22 November 1963

(*)
[redacted] arrived [redacted] on the morning of 22 November b3
and met with (**) [redacted] late that afternoon. (*) [redacted] states that he b1, b3

(*) A CIA case officier

(**) AMLASH

[redacted]

[redacted]

(*)
showed the pen/syringe to [redacted] He is not b1 b3
sure, but he believes that [redacted] (*) accepted the device but said that he b3
would not take it to Cuba with him. [redacted] (**) distinctly recalls that
[redacted] (*) didn't think much of the device. [redacted] (*) said [redacted] b1 b3
[redacted] that we surely could come up
with something more sophisticated than that. [redacted]

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(*) AMLASH

(**) A CIA case officier

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] it is likely that at the very moment President Kennedy was shot a CIA officer was meeting with a Cuban agent [redacted] and giving him an assassination device for use against Castro. [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted] b1

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

(*) (Comment: [redacted] explained to us that what had happened was that SAS contrived to put (**) [redacted] and (***) [redacted] together in such a way that neither knew that the contact had been engineered by CIA. The thought was that (**) [redacted] needed a man inside and (***) [redacted] wanted a silenced weapon, which CIA was unwilling to furnish

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(*) A CIA case officier

(**) B-1

(***) AMLASH

[redacted]

[redacted]

to him directly. By putting the two together, (*) [redacted] might get his man inside and (**) [redacted] might get his silenced weapon--from (*) [redacted]

[redacted]

(*) [redacted] and (**) [redacted] met [redacted] in late 1964 and early 1965 in Madrid/[redacted] (*) [redacted] reported the results in a meeting with (***) [redacted] (**) [redacted] told (*) [redacted] that he had requested

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(*) B-1
(**) AMLASH
(***) CIA case officer [redacted]

[redacted]

a silencer for a FAL rifle from the Americans, which they had not been able to provide. (*) [redacted] agreed to furnish either a silencer for a FAL or a comparable rifle with silencer. [redacted] If (*) [redacted] had to settle for some other type of silenced rifle, he would cache it in Cuba (**) [redacted]

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[redacted]

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(*) B-1

(**) AMLASH

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[redacted]

11 February 1965

A CIA [redacted] Station cabled: that [redacted] (*) is to receive one pistol with silencer and one Belgian FAL rifle with silencer from [redacted] (**) secretary. [redacted]

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12 February 1965

[redacted] (**) ~~had three packages of special items made up by~~ his technical people and delivered to [redacted] (*)

[redacted]

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15 March 1965

[redacted] that one Rafael GARCIA-BANGO Dirube had arrived in Madrid from Cuba on 15 March [redacted] Garcia-Bango claimed to be in contact with a

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(*) AMLASH

(**) B-1

[redacted]

[redacted]

group of Cuban military leaders who were planning to eliminate Castro and take over the government. It quickly became clear that he was referring to (*) [redacted] Garcia-Bango said that he had always been publicly identified as a close friend of (*) [redacted] whom he last saw in Havana on 9 March. Garcia-Bango said that he had been the lawyer for the Capri Hotel in Havana. He was jailed for 75 days in July 1962 for defending Santos Trafficante, [redacted] b1 b3

[redacted]

b1 b3

June 1965

Headquarters decided to terminate all contacts with key members of the (*) [redacted] group. / for reasons of security [redacted] b1 b3

(*) AMLASH

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with them was ever-widening. The last straw came in early June 1965. [redacted]

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Discussion of Assassination at High-Level Government Meetings

Drew Pearson claims to have a report that there was a high-level meeting at the Department of State at which plans for the assassination of Castro were discussed. We find record of two high-level, interagency meetings at which assassination of Castro was raised. The first (and probably the one to which Pearson refers) was at the Department of State on 10 August 1962. It was a meeting of the Special Group (Augmented). [redacted]

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10 August 1962

The Special Group (Augmented) met at the Department of State, either in Secretary Rusk's office or in his conference room. The following are recorded as being present:

State	Dean Rusk, Alexis Johnson, Edwin Martin, Richard Goodwin, Robert Hurwitch
White House	Maxwell Taylor, McGeorge Bundy (Bill Harvey's notes record that Robert Kennedy was absent and that Bundy had his proxy.)
Defense	Robert McNamara, Roswell Gilpatric, Lyman Lemnitzer, Edward Lansdale

[redacted]

[redacted]

CIA John McCone, William Harvey

USIA Edward Murrow, Donald Wilson

Secretary Thomas Parrott

Tom Parrott's minutes of the meeting make no mention of the subject of assassination. Both McCone and Harvey recall that McNamara raised the subject. Harvey's notes taken at the meeting show that it was also mentioned by Murrow, but the nature of the comments was not recorded. [redacted] b1 b3 b5 It is quite clear that assassination came up for discussion at the 10 August meeting at State.) Mr. McCone says that he took immediate exception to the discussion and promptly after the meeting called on Secretary McNamara personally to emphasize his position. According to McCone, McNamara "heartily agreed." McCone states in his memorandum that at no time did the suggestion receive serious consideration by the Special Group (Augmented)

[redacted]

[redacted]

or by any individual responsible for policy. [redacted] Harvey recalls that, when McCone told him of the McCone-McNamara conversation, McCone said that if he, McCone, were to be involved in such a thing he would be excommunicated.

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Following the 10 August meeting, and without reference to the reported exchange between McCone and McNamara, Lansdale addressed a memorandum on 13 August to William Harvey (CIA), Robert Hurwitch (State), General Harris (Defense), and Don Wilson (USIA). The memorandum assigned responsibility for drafting papers on various subjects related to the Cuban operation. Harvey's assignment included: "Intelligence, Political (splitting the regime, /portion excised from the CIA file copy/).

On 14 August, Harvey submitted a memorandum to the DD/P (Helms) reporting the Lansdale communication and what Harvey had done about it. Harvey's memorandum to the DD/P states that the excised portion had consisted of the phrase: "including elimination of leaders". Harvey wrote that he had phoned Lansdale's office and had [redacted] protested the use of the phrase and had proposed that steps be taken to have it

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excised from all copies. This was agreed to. Harvey deleted the phrase from his own copy [redacted]

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[redacted]

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The reference is clearly to a 10 June 1964 memorandum information report from the DD/P to the Director. The following additional "elite" dissemination was made of it:

Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Assistant Secretary, Inter-American Affairs, Department of State
Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
Director, Defense Intelligence Agency
The Attorney General
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Intelligence

The report related a proposal for the assassination of Castro that was made to prominent Cuban exiles. The Mafia appeared to be involved in the scheme. The asking price for doing the job was $150,000, with a guarantee of $10,000 for expenses. A [redacted] Cuban exile, [redacted] JMWAVE, and suggested that the U.S. Government also contribute funds. The suggestion was rejected out of hand. The record indicates that CIA's only involvement in the plot was to report information of its existence. The last record we find of the incident

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[redacted]

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[redacted] b1

[redacted] b5

As we have said earlier, if Drew Pearson has firm information on a high-level meeting at which assassination of Castro was discussed, it is likely that the reference would be to the 10 August 1962 meeting of the Special Group (Augmented). [redacted] b1

[redacted]

Published Details	The Facts As We Know Them
The CIA hatched a plot to knock off Castro.	True.
Robert Kennedy may have approved an assassination plot.	Not true. He was briefed on Gambling Syndicate-Phase One after it was over. He was not briefed on Phase Two.
Underworld figures were actually recruited to carry out the plot.	True.
Three hired assassins were caught in Havana where a lone survivor is still supposed to be languishing in prison.	Roselli informed Harvey on 21 June 1962, presumably on the basis of information from [redacted], that a team of three men was inside Cuba. We do not know their identities nor what may have happened to them. We have no proof that they were actually dispatched. None of the announced captures and executions during this period fits this team. b1, b3
Castro learned enough at least to believe the CIA was seeking to kill him. He is reported to have cooked up a counterplot against President Kennedy.	This reportedly has come out in the Garrison investigations. It also was stated by [redacted] in the Philippines under direct interrogation. We have no independent confirmation of any sort. (Note that Garrison met with Roselli in Las Vegas in March 1967.) b1 b3
Unpublished Details	
Pills were sent to Cuba for use in the assassination.	True. At least we were told by Roselli that the pills were sent in during Phase One and again in Phase Two.
There was a meeting at the Department of State at which the assassination of Castro was discussed.	True. The subject was raised at a meeting at State on 10 August 1962, but it is-unrelated to any actual attempts at assassination. It did result in a MONGOOSE action memorandum by Lansdale assigning to CIA action for planning liquidation of leaders. The offending phrase was later excised from copies forwarded to CIA, State, Defense, and USIA, but the damage may already have been done.

The Possible Ramifications of the Gambling Syndicate Operation

[redacted]

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The Possible Ramifications of the Gambling Syndicate Operation

The earlier sections of this report describe all of the CIA schemes aimed at the assassination of Castro that we have been able to discover. The accounts of the two phases of the gambling syndicate operation are factual to the extent that they are based on what those interviewed recall or believe the facts to have been. It is evident that some of those facts have leaked, are being talked about, or are being peddled. On the opposite page is a list of the main details of the story Drew Pearson has, as they are known to us, together with a brief comment on the apparent accuracy of each. There is support in fact for most of the details in Pearson's story. He has a garbled account of the role played by Robert Kennedy, and he errs in telling the story as if all of the details are part of a single story, which they are not. For the most part, though, his facts are straight and he has the truly important aspects of the gambling syndicate operation.

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contents.

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[redacted] None of them would have compunctions about dragging in his CIA connection when he was being pushed by law enforcement authorities. [redacted]

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him on the Pearson story.

d. Pearson, Anderson, and Greenspun (in Las Vegas) are newspapermen with a newsworthy story. Pearson has already published much of it.

e. Maheu does have good reason for not wanting the story aired further. Unfavorable publicity might cause him to lose his lucrative client, Howard Hughes. There might be some value to be gained from endorsing his suggestion that he approach [redacted] and perhaps Roselli and urge discretion. b1, b3

What do other components of Government know about this operation?

Former Attorney General Robert Kennedy was fully briefed by Houston and Edwards on 7 May 1962. A memorandum confirming the oral briefing was forwarded to Kennedy on 14 May 1962. The memorandum does not use the word "assassinate," but there is little room for misinterpretation of what was meant. Presumably the original of that memorandum is still in the files of the Justice Department. It should be noted that the briefing of Kennedy was restricted to Phase One of the operation, which had ended about a year earlier. Phase Two was already under way at the time of the briefing, but Kennedy was not told of it.

As far as we know, the FBI has not been told the sensitive

[redacted]

[redacted]

operational details, but it would be naive to assume that they have not by now put two and two together and come out with the right answer. They know of CIA's involvement with Roselli and Giancana as a result of the Las Vegas wiretapping incident. From the Chicago newspaper stories of August 1963, and from Giancana's own statement, it appears that they know this related to Cuba. When Roselli's story reached them (Roselli to Morgan to Pearson to Warren to Rowley to the FBI), all of the pieces should have fallen into place. They should by now have concluded that CIA plotted the assassination of Castro and used U.S. gangster elements in the operation.

There is some support for this thesis in the conversation I had with Sam Papich on 3 May 1967 when I told him of the expected meeting between Roselli and Harvey. Sam commented that Roselli and Giancana have CIA "over a barrel" because of "that operation." He said that he doubted that the FBI would be able to do anything about either Roselli or Giancana because of "their previous activities with your people."

<u>Can we plausibly deny that we plotted with gangster elements to assassinate Castro?</u>

No, we cannot. We are reasonably confident that there is nothing in writing outside of the Government that would confirm Pearson's

[redacted]

[redacted]

story of the gambling syndicate operation, but there are plenty of non-gangster witnesses who could lend confirmation.

a. Maheu can confirm that Shef Edwards told Roselli that Edwards had told the Attorney General of Roselli's activities on behalf of the Government.

b. [redacted] can confirm the pill and three-man team elements of the story. 51, 53

c. [redacted] can confirm the pill element of Phase One. 51, 53

d. If an independent investigation were to be ordered, the investigators could learn everything that we have learned. Such an investigation probably would uncover details unknown to us, because it would have access to the non-CIA participants.

Can CIA state or imply that it was merely an instrument of policy?

Not in this case. While it is true that Phase Two was carried out in an atmosphere of intense Kennedy administration pressure to do something about Castro, such is not true of the earlier phase. Phase One was initiated in August 1960 under the Eisenhower administration. Phase Two is associated in Harvey's mind with the Executive Action Capability, which reportedly was developed in response to White House urgings. Again, Phase One had been started and abandoned months before the Executive Action Capability appeared

[redacted]

[redacted]

on the scene.

When Robert Kennedy was briefed on Phase One in May 1962, he strongly admonished Houston and Edwards to check with the Attorney General in advance of any future intended use of U.S. criminal elements. This was not done with respect to Phase Two, which was already well under way at the time Kennedy was briefed. The Pearson story, which is now causing us so much distress, includes one detail that is found only in Phase Two: the three-man team.

<u>What measures might be taken to lessen the damage?</u>

We see little to be gained from personal approaches now to Maheu, Morgan, or Roselli. Maheu has much to lose and might be able to prevail upon Morgan and Roselli not to spread the story further. It is questionable whether any such urging would be effective with Roselli, because Roselli stands only to gain from having the story of his CIA connection known and accepted. We cannot now suppress the story, because it is already out and may boil up afresh from the Garrison case. If we were to approach any of the participants and urge discretion upon him, and if this became known, it would merely lend credence to a tale that now sounds somewhat improbable.

[redacted]